

THE MOON BODEGA

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A THESIS SUBMITTED

TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN FILM

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

JANUARY 2016

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ABSTRACT

The Moon Bodega is a 16 minute associative science fiction film that explores alienation and liminality through the components in cinema that are typically excluded. This includes the physicality of space, touch and sound. *The Comprehensive Guide To Navigating The Abyss* is a roadmap to the production and process of making the this film. This glossary acts as a homage to Rem Koolhaas' monumental book, S.M.L.XL - While it doesn't function as a traditional document, it's support nature is closer to a supplementary text which includes memories, ideas, definitions, jokes, thoughts and advice to my past, present and future work. This text allowed me to explore and create a document that I can continue adding to into the future. The glossary starts with Afronauts and ends with Yahli - all the definitions were written by me unless stated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to say thank you for the continued trust and support of my supervisory team, John Greyson and Kenneth Rogers on all my experimental journeys.

I would also like to thank the staff at York, especially Kuowei Lee, Marcos Arriaga and Jon Hedley for being so accommodating.

I gratefully acknowledge the help of my friends and family in the making of this film and support paper. Tessa Liem, Daniel Froidevaux, Daniel Valle, JP King, Chelsea McMullan, Catherine Falls, Meghan Greeley, Kami Chisholm, I couldn't have done this without you.

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INTRODUCTION

Michel Foucault writes, "What distinguishes language from all other signs and enables it to play a decisive role in representation...is not so much that it is individual or collective, natural or arbitrary, but that its analysis representation according to necessarily successive order; the sounds in fact can be articulated one by one; language cannot represent thought, instantly, in its totality; it is bound to arrange it, part by part in a linear order".¹ This glossary is intended to avoid this trap of linearity, to cast webs onto the abyss of the unspeakable.

Jacques Derrida's post-structuralist term *différance* speaks to appearances that are continually altered and destabilized through a series of limitless variables² 'The Moon Bodega' and this glossary are a thesis project that supports such discontinuities and fragmentation as an artistic strategy. This structure is designed to allow parallel interpretations, to surpass the limits of traditional narrative order, and to observe of these fluctuating signifiers.

It seems natural that I find a format for the dissertation that follows the inception of this film, that followed a nonlinear process of creation. As such, I have chosen to model this discussion on the glossary in Rem Koolhaas' seminal architectural bible, S,M,L,XL.³ I've chosen to apply Koolhaas' approach for this dissertation as his interest in parallel of creative processes is very similar to mine. This glossary acts as a homage to Koolhaas, that includes memories, ideas, definitions, jokes, thoughts and advice to my past, present and future work.

THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO NAVIGATING THE ABYSS

AFRONAUTS

Shortly after Zambia gained independence in 1964, school teacher Edward Makuka Nkoloso asked UNESCO for a 7 million dollar grant for the Zambian National Academy of Science Space Research and Philosophy with the intention of sending 12 Africans and one cat into space.

BARNEY

Starting with the Cremaster cycle⁴, Matthew Barney's practice stands unparalleled in the impact it has had on my creative endeavours. His approach, dedication and scope - bordering on the metaphysical - is second to none. I'll touch on a few points that strike me about his work. Barney chooses materials that exist in several states and thus touch different worlds. For example, vaseline can traverse multiple states at the same time: solid, gelatinous, liquid. Barney is always all in with his work - no compromises. He gets inside a subject, goes the whole way confidently, and gets everyone involved, regardless of how dirty the process is along the way. The way that he thinks as a director is also very interesting, for his coverage of certain events is very familiar. Cremaster 1, for instance, was shot with a style similar to how a sports game would be covered, making the abstract familiar. It is this in-betweenness that is very appealing to me.

The only problem that I see with the art does not come from the materiality of the work, but from Barney's explanation of it. Like myself, Barney, was trained as sculptor and his aim is mostly for the audience to become aware of the physicality and presence of the sculpture in space. This is

continually offset by Barney talking about his work. Watching interviews with Barney is always unnerving; his disconnection between the two material (body) and the mind (text) is something he is still continually trying to form, almost like a nervous tic. This has always framed his work through the ‘artists lenses,’ which diminishes what the work could be.

BARNEY2

‘It’s what’s outside the frame that scares me’⁵

BARNEY3

‘a lot of my work has to do with not allowing my characters to have an ego in a way that the stomach doesn’t have an ego - when it’s wanting to throw up. It just does it.’⁶

BECOMING

I increasingly wonder why the world still hasn’t adjusted to the distortion of my personality.

BEGINNING

John Cage once described an inability to know where to begin as the most common form of paralysis. Anywhere is a good place to begin.⁷ For ten minutes, try to start anywhere. It’s supposed to be uncomfortable.

BLUR

Remember when Robin Williams becomes blurry in Woody Allen's Deconstructing Harry?⁸ Out of a focus. What a horrible state to be in.

BLUR2

A man with a microphone is standing on the beach in front of a floating blur. Originally, this work was one of two digital videos created for commercial time slots on late night public access television. The work was only seen by some unsuspecting viewers, in its new form it becomes a catalyst for the protagonist to realize that something has changed in her immediate environment. The blur foreshadows the second blur on top of the black mountain in Iceland.

CARPENTER

My father had a dry sense of humour. When asked what he did for a living, he would proudly say, 'I'm a carpenter' then add 'like Jesus.'

CHIEF

The most accurate directing analogy that I can think of is a hybrid between a cheerleader and a plate spinner. Moving back and forth between departments, keeping everyone's momentum building and focused in the right direction. The less experienced the actors, the better the cheerleader one needs to become. After some pep and a little bit of correction in momentum, everything will work out smoothly. It takes two days to get a strong working momentum with a diverse group of people.

CLICKBAIT

You are never going to believe what happens next.

CONCEPT

One of my primary goals in making The Moon Bodega is to address feelings of alienation and isolation. I achieve this by exploring the consciousness of a protagonist through space, symbol and image. The main character is a mediator between two different worlds, struggling to identify herself categorically. The underlying theme of this project, liminality, can be generalized and aligned with the loneliness that comes from being marginalized. The architecture of the space is like a dream, all the characters are apparitions of herself - each piece needs the care, love and attention to make whole before she makes the journey across the abyss.

COOL

Cool will always deceive. Cool has no comment for it is cooler to remain neutral and have no opinion. Cool cannot dance, smile, be impressed, love, or laugh. Cool is a border around every thought and action. Don't follow cool, let it follow you.

COSTUME

Instead of using a stylist or a costume designer, I enlisted the help of a clothing picker to search out specific fashion and fabric styles for the project. Huge warehouses exist on the edge of the city that receive thousands of pounds of donated clothing a day. A small group of pickers pay a weight cost to sift through these mountains of clothes and to make racks for their clients. This

approach enables a unique, worn look that is not seen in other films. For better or for worse, it also gave me more control than working with a costume designer.

CUT

My father once snipped off the edge of my ear while trimming my hair. He was cutting much too quickly. It was harder to respect his authority as a hairdresser after that.

DEADMAN

Deadman (1995)⁹ is an under-appreciated masterpiece that will always inform my work. The beginning of this film is still one of my favourite cinema openings of all time. Jim Jarmusch set the stage for *The Moon Bodega*. A death dream is illustrated in every frame, sound, movement and choice in this film. The duality of black and white, the episodic fades of each scene, the reflexive tempo, dressing of scenes. Through the main protagonist, Dead Man unpacks the poetic relationship of the transitional states of death and ‘death anxiety’ with the help of an indigenous spirit guide, Nobody. Through exploring the story and motif of the film, I hope to affirm its position as a spiritual text and explore its influence on my upcoming work. In many ways, death becomes spiritual significance for Blake, a man traveling through a purgatory into an afterlife, through the loss of self-identity, a self-surrender, a transition in the mythology of a hero’s journey. The meaning of human existence in its totality of being has been a central question for philosophy. At eight and a half minutes, the opening of *Dead Man* is seemingly long. Its pacing, editing and discontinuity is less conventional than what is common in most Hollywood films.

The first eight and half minutes have all the thematic elements necessary to understand this film; Death as life, life as death, a dead man, death as a journey. A philosophical treatise on death.

DMT

Dimethyltryptamine is a psychedelic compound in the tryptamine family, found naturally in the human body as well as in Ayahuasca, used in spiritual and healing ceremonies of the indigenous of the Amazon. A necessary component to brain functioning, DMT is known as the strongest psychedelic known to man, and is found commonly occurring in all forms of life. It is possibly why we dream and is dumped into our blood stream when we die. There has been an increase in research in DMT in the last ten years.¹⁰

DREAM

When you live alone, no one asks how well you slept the night before.

DREAM2

Everything and everyone is a object or character in our dreams, when you don't like something or push it away it's a suppression of a part of ourself. This is why it feels ugly. We think that we can control it by pushing it away, but the psyche only suppresses what it fears. The only way we can find true peace is to accept and eventually find love for the all the things that we don't like. This is non-attachment.

DURIAN

this notoriously smelly eastern delicacy is known in asian culture as a symbol of letting go. The durian changes form from a lychee in an early scene - from a soft colourful fruit to a spiny sharp weapon. It's used to help Kyle externalize his pain, but doesn't work.

DUST

By patting a pillow under a studio light I was able to create a beautiful swirl of moving dust particles followed by a slow pan.

EDITING

Walter Murch once said 'We accept the cut because it resembles the way images are juxtaposed in our dreams. In fact, the abruptness of the cut may be one of the key determinants in actually producing the similarity between films and dreams.'¹¹ Editing *The Moon Bodega* was an experiment. As we shot the film, I had a good idea of how it might be edited - but that changed as when I started cutting. The initial vision was to create soft transitions with cross-fades - this created a film that was too long and slow. I took a new and harder approach after that, using hard cuts and cross cutting. The film has more teeth, a bit more of an edge. After a major edit took place, I needed at least a week before I could see it again. Showing it to friends has really helped the process.

EXIST

A wise man named Jorge Luis Borges once said, 'I am not sure that I exist, actually. I am all the writers that I have read, all the people that I have met, all the women that I have loved; all the cities I have visited.'¹²

FALL

The word grief is derived from gravare, a latin term that references gravity in the sense of 'make heavy; cause grief'.

FALLING

I asked 16 people if they would cry on camera for me. All but one were very interested in trying and when the session was done, all felt like the experience was quite cathartic. In a few cases the tears just wouldn't flow, so we used a classic 'rub some onion oil underneath your eye' approach. The interest was generated from mixed media work from 1971 titled 'I'm Too Sad to Tell You' by Bas Jan Ader, where the Dutch artist stares at the camera and starts to weep. Crying is very much like letting yourself fall. It takes effort to bring yourself to the precipice of a cliff and lose complete control. There were many interesting conversations about grief and letting go, as we got close, I would leave the room.

FALLING2

There's a beautiful Farsi word that has no english translation. Bhoghz. It's the expression of the moment just before someone is about to cry.¹³

FLIGHT

If the outcome is pushing the process, we can only arrive at a place where we have already been before. If it's the other way around, we might not know exactly where we're going but we will learn more than in the process.

FWB

I have too many friends without benefits.

GHOST

Charles Ray's 'Unpainted Sculpture' is a life size fibreglass cast from a 1991 Pontiac Grand AM.¹⁴ This specific car was chosen for its form because it perfectly communicated the idea of collision. After being purchased, the car was taken apart. Each piece was molded and cast, then put back together into the shape of the wreck. The sculpture has a provocative realness and an abstracted quality that parallels time. It's sculptural uniformity makes it float between questioning the real, ideal, representation, and abstraction. I've always wondered if 'Unpainted Sculpture' possessed any of the trauma of the past crash?

GOENKA

I once sat cross-legged on the ground in Onalaska, Washington, for 10 days in complete silence. After that I felt more strong and whole than I have my whole life.

GOOD

If a vague idea is suggested to a collaborator and they have a facsimile image of it in their mind's eye, then the idea must be discarded or built upon until one party has to go further to illustrate. One will never do anything new if both parties know exactly what the other is thinking off the cuff.

GRAVE

“Always falling into a hole, then saying ‘ok, this is not your grave, get out of this hole,’ getting out of the hole which is not the grave, falling into a hole again, saying ‘ok, this is also not your grave, get out of this hole,’ getting out of that hole, falling into another one; sometimes falling into a hole within a hole, or many holes within holes, getting out of them one after the other, then falling again, saying ‘this is not your grave, get out of the hole’; sometimes being pushed, saying ‘you can not push me into this hole, it is not my grave,’ and getting out defiantly, then falling into a hole again without any pushing; sometimes falling into a set of holes whose structures are predictable, ideological, and long dug, often falling into this set of structural and impersonal holes; sometimes falling into holes with other people, with other people, saying ‘this is not our mass grave, get out of this hole,’ all together getting out of the hole together, hands and legs and arms and human ladders of each other to get out of the hole that is not the mass grave but that will only be gotten out of together; sometimes the willful-falling into a hole which is not the grave because it is easier than not falling into a hole really, but then once in it, realizing it is not the grave, getting out of the hole eventually; sometimes falling into a hole and languishing there for days, weeks, months, years, because while not the grave very difficult, still, to climb out of

and you know after this hole there's just another and another; sometimes surveying the landscape of holes and wishing for a high quality final hole; sometimes thinking of who has fallen into holes which are not graves but might be better if they were; sometimes too ardently contemplating the final hole while trying to avoid the provisional ones; sometimes dutifully falling and getting out, with perfect fortitude, saying 'look at the skill and spirit with which I rise from that which resembles the grave but isn't!'"¹⁵

GROCERY

Please tell me everything about your relationship to broccoli as child.

GREETING

It's very hard to clear one's throat while standing in line without someone in front of you turning around.

INBETWEEN

It will always be hard. It will not necessarily feel good. If it always feels good then you don't have real growth.

INFLAMMATION

From that day on, the young writer never used the word 'truth' without its necessary scare quotes.

JOSEPH

Using non-fiction, sound and style, Khalil Joseph's work has had a major impact on my interest in moving image. It brings together elements that stand out from other videos in its genre. This is especially true of 'When The Quiet Comes,' a work that pushes and pulls with poetic, lyrical and provocative imagery, telling a story through detail specific montage. The work has mystical moments and realism, floating between the two: a child that won't stop bleeding, people eating Cheetos on a bench, a group of kids running around with sticks shaped like guns. All stories emerge from the ghetto. We see strong tonal shifts in color: a man underwater in turquoise, kids running in the grass in hard red and greens and then, like a hard payoff, we follow the subject with a steadicam, his surroundings still, rising from his death, finding his way before the ending. What is specifically interesting is that Joseph's work crosses between multiple art forms, including music video, art film, new media. It's this combination that creates such a synergistic dynamism.¹⁶

JOKE

The society had a ceremony for the young artist. At the end of his study, the young artist gives the masterwork to two men dressed in white. They slowly and meticulously load it into a truck and take it to the centre of town. It's Sunday, the townspeople have gathered and a crowd starts to form around the covered sculpture, including the parents of the young artist. A third man arrives in the same ceremonial robe, he places the support structure in front of the sculpture. The sculpture is unveiled and for a moment everyone is still. He then walks back down the steps to

his car where he opens up the trunk, pulls out a sledgehammer and walks to the top of the support structure. He proceeds to smash the sculpture until it is reduced to a pile of rubble. The crowd cheers. After it's said and done, the artist is handed a broom and dustpan. He picks up the plaster and takes it back, wetting it to start all over again.

JOURNALISM

One can always ask better questions. The surface is the most slippery place to get traction.

KIDDING

Jayus is an Indonesian term. It describes the experience of finding a joke so badly told, so far from funny that the only thing you could possibly do is laugh.

LIGHT

The original project that I intended to work on through a Master's at York was about The Heaven's Gate, an American futuristic cult that existed in San Diego, California, from 1972 to 1997. It is most infamously known for its mass suicide in 1997, enacted in order to board a UFO.¹⁷ While 39 members perished in the collective suicide, one member, under the name 'Sawyer,' was strategically left behind to communicate with media and others interested in learning about the leaders, Marshall Applewhite and Bonnie Nettles. Between 2013 and 2014, I had a monthly correspondence with Sawyer about the state of the cult. After trusting my interest, he sent me one of the last of the 'Heaven's Gate Bibles.' Upon request, Sawyer and I started discussing the creation of a documentary together. Things were going well until late Spring 2014

when there was a clear decline in Sawyer's ability to remember certain aspects of the idea. As excited as I was about this project, and even though I had prior consent, it seemed that the only responsible thing to do was stop the project and check in later with Sawyer. This project is still something that I look forward to re-approaching in the future.

LIMINALITY

The concept of 'liminality,' as discussed by the anthropologist, Victor Turner, has provided a substantial theoretical grounding for this project and has helped it come to fruition. The meaning of liminality may be understood in relation to its Latin root 'limen', which translates as 'threshold'. Turner, in his groundbreaking 1967 book, *The Forest of Symbols*¹⁸, develops liminality as a term that describes the oscillation between two states, places, times, or situations. In my project, liminality is applied to states of being and questions categorical discomforts that surround changes of state. Liminality is the transformative threshold that permits a crossing between multiple worlds. Turner identifies three progressive stages of liminality. The first is separation, where the individual or group is removed from its existing social structure or previous identity. The second stage is a transitional phase, where the individual or group loses their identity and stands out of a defined space and time. The third stage is the incorporation stage, where the individual or group re-enters the social structure, establishing a new identity. While *The Moon Bodega* touches on all three states of liminality, its focus is on the second stage, the transitional phase. *The Moon Bodega* is a site of transition. For the protagonist, it is a place in which the characters and setting feel both familiar and foreign. As a stage and platform, it is a

middle ground where she is forced to address her identity and state of permanence through interaction and engagement with other characters.

LUCID

They need to manufacture a drug that aids us in remembering our dreams.

LYNCH

An off kilter scene in Mulholland Drive, known infamously as 'The Winkies' scene, is a nightmare within a dream. Lynch shows us two detectives discussing a dream in a diner during the golden hour. Shot with decisive discontinuities in an unwieldy way, it became an inspiration, opening possibilities for shooting a style of fiction.

MAGIC

An extremely wise man by the name of W.B. Yeats once wrote: "I believe in the practice and philosophy of what we have agreed to call magic, in what I must call the evocation of spirits, though I do not know what they are, in the power of creating magical illusions, in the visions of truth in the depths of the mind when the eyes are closed; and I believe ... that the borders of our mind are ever shifting, and that many minds can flow into another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy... and that our memories are part of one great memory, the memory of nature herself."¹⁹

MELATONIN

There's a Japanese word 'Otsukaresamadesu - it roughly translates to 'you are probably tired, and I think that's great.'

MONSOON

The term, 'crocodile tears' is a phrase that derives itself from an ancient belief that crocodiles shed tears while consuming their victims.

MOOD

Learning how to execute the role that you are positioned to execute requires heavily curbing a micro-managing instinct and trusting the choices of the people that surround you.

Miscommunication can be easily avoided by being as comprehensive as possible (through, for example, mood boards with pictures, designs, drawings, quotes, anything). Even when someone acts understanding, never assume a person is conjuring your same idea in their head. Finding a way to get close to that shared image is necessary.

MOON

With my body slumped into a worn oak chair and my head swimming with the smoky tincture of Mezcal, I had a thought: I don't want to be a poet anymore. I just want to be the poem.

NARCOLEPSY

This film was made because I have a very hard time getting to sleep at night.

NEWS

The one thing he knew that was always constant. The one thing he knew for sure. He loved to deliver bad news.

PELEYSCHAN

Distance Montage²⁰ is a term to used describe the intuitive collection of film fragments into a totality montage using the perception of depth and motion. For example, using the perception of depth and motion to create seamless cuts. The example that has been used to describe this effect, is a pack of antelope running cut with humans moving. It was coined by the late Armenian director Artzvhad Peleyschan.

PORTAL

I created a light vortex by adding bicycle lights to a fan.

PRODUCTIVE

‘What’s wrong?’ her friend asked. She turned her gaze down into her arms where her child lay.

‘Well.. I still don’t feel fulfilled.’

PUDDLE

Narcissuses missed the depth of the stagnant pool that he peered into. The surface has fatal edges. Though, being a flower for the rest of time can’t be *so* bad.

PURPLE

The colour palette for this film consists of reds and blues and the combination of these colours as they come together in a purply magenta. These pulpy colours remind me of the inks used on the cheap papers of 80's comic books. Within eastern understandings, purple represents the transition between yang and yin, active and passive. It is cleverly situated as the last colour in the rainbow, at the end of the known and the beginning of the unknown. It has been cited as the royal color of death.²¹

QUESTIONS

Standing in front of the class, I told my students that I was going to go through them each one by one, and they were going to ask me the stupidest question they could think of. When a question seemed not as stupid, I would ask that student for a simpler question. There was lots of learning that day.

QUITETUS

I was leaning against the wall of a club in Northern Iceland, a blonde girl came up, forgetting the word for foreigner, she asks in broken english, 'Are you a refugee?' Yes, I answered... 'but a desirable refugee.'

REVENGE

I had a dream last night that a hamburger was trying to eat me.

RIRKIRT

Smile when they start looking at you to maintain facial recognition.

RIES

Test everything in any rudimentary way possible. Build a lean version of your idea, an experiment, a working hypothesis. Build - Measure - Learn. Just to see how it functions. Never assume. All my major failures have assumptions attached to it. Have no expectations.²²

SAGE

A wise man once said, if you wake up and you're not in pain, then you know that you're not dead.

SAUDADE

A pleasure you suffer, an ailment you enjoy, describes this untranslatable Portuguese word.

SCENE

A couple are having an argument outside of a cafe. Right at the height of the dispute, a man taps them on the shoulder. 'Can you spare some change, kind sir,' he says. The wife looks at the husband, the husband at the beggar, the beggar at the wife.

SCHNAPSIDEE

The Germans have some wonderful untranslatable words. One of them being, described as an ‘ingenious plan hatched while drunk.’

SCHOOL

Emily Carr was a very important place for my development as an artist. It put me in direct relation to the Vancouver school, a group of photographers that has taught off and on there. Seeing the way that they approached the process of making work - particularly seeing how they invested and how much time they took - was very important. Without an urgent market like New York, the Vancouver school took the time needed to create meaningful work, which ended up being recognized for its contribution to art at large. There will always be a dash of tableau in my work from Jeff Wall, a pinch of humour from Rodney Graham, and a shake of the political from Ken Lum. I miss the Vancouver community and the richness of thought that is happening there.

SCOTOMA

The house painter realized much too late that he had successfully painted himself into a physical and proverbial corner

SCRIPT

The Bodega script was a collection of fragments, scribbles, ideas, daydreams, sayings, and jokes woven together into a document. The intention of the script was to create a liminal/in-between space for a protagonist to move through and respond to. A script is mostly there as an

initiative, something to spark conversation, collaboration, to help massage an idea into form. A script can only improve by being challenged. It's necessary to be working with a crew and cast that could do this for you. Many versions of this script were written and re-written. Writing for subjects that I knew, using their own characters to inform the project, helped a project with non-actors become more successful. The dogma of a script format creates a very linear approach to filmmaking, which might have not been the best way to formulate this project. The next project will use a treatment approach and allow for much more time with the actors.

SEA

Take someone that's never seen the ocean on a trip to the sea.

SEQUENCE

The number of cuts in a sequence determines the length of each cut. Not the other way around. The camera will move to emphasize the character depending on what's intended for each scene. It may attempt to capture a character's reaction, show a specific character in a group, transfer attention from one subject to another, or connect two spaces. The height of the camera will show psychological and status relationships between subjects. The movement of the camera can establish the relationship between the audience and the subject: distance makes us feel like we don't know the subject, closer gives us intimacy, but there's no hard rule.

SHADOW

Etymologically, photography breaks down into ‘writing or drawing with light.’ Yet, darkness is half of this duality. The early photographer, William Henry Talbot, wrote of the process of photography as a type of ‘shadowgraphy’. Nothing within a duality can exist without its opposite. Light is half of the whole, its alter-ego Lillith, yang, the doppelgänger, its shadow. The shadow has been cast into a negative light, historically introduced by the Greeks, who used it as one of the metaphors for the psyche, the soul. If a person had died, their soul would be compared to a shadow. Hades, the land of death, is also known as the land of shadow. Despite these negative associations, the shadow has many notable uses, including dimensionality in image making, foreshadowing with metaphors in literature, and childhood development in psychology.

SHADOW2

Peter Pan was always misplacing and re-uniting with his beloved shadow. This idea is reaffirmed in Plato’s parable of knowledge. The prisoners that were incapable of gazing directly into the light of knowledge, with their backs to the wall, could only respond to the shadows of the world. The prisoners must renounce the shadow of reality in order to transcend the cave and experience the brightness of the sun.

SHOOT

Shooting the Bodega took four days. Initially planned to be three days, the fourth was added for necessary pickups. All of these days went quite smoothly, though we were understaffed in the camera department and the main assistant camera had an immigration test. As a result, we had

multiple people pulling focus. Not the best idea. Other problems included the child actor that decided the night before that she wasn't going to come (we found another child) and another actor that showed up for his part after washing down a handful of xanax with a bottle of white wine. Most of his role was unusable and edited out of the project.

SILENCE

A philosopher once asked Buddha, 'Will you tell me the truth?' The Buddha kept silent. With this answer, the Philosopher was freed from delusion²³

SLOMO

I've always thought Cruel Intentions²⁴ would have been much better in slow motion.

SOMATIC

In a book titled 'Waking the Tiger,' Dr. Peter Levine explores a third state of trauma between fight and flight: the 'deer in headlights' response, immobilization. Levine shows in multiple examples how residual energy from this frozen state terrorizes our nervous systems, and how it might be possible to release that energy with an embodied approach to psychotherapy.²⁵

SOUND

Using field recordings, ambience and the off cuts of records, the soundtrack was a compilation of sonic layers. It was designed to build an ethereal ghostly space that reflects and explores the architectural environment of the bodega. Recordings that moved towards music were discarded

in favour of sounds that could be more useful as layering tools. The result was a more consistent sonic architecture. This structure was inspired by the way DJs create and collage sounds to make music. I wondered if a similar thing could be done with all the refuse of sound production. While I'm still learning the technical, the soundscape is as equally as important to me as the image.

STORY

The narrative centres around a protagonist who falls asleep in the storeroom of the Moon Bodega, where she works. She finds herself locked inside the store overnight, caught in a surreal state between sleeping and waking, possibly between life and death. She wanders through the Moon Bodega, where she meets a variety of characters who share her thoughts, questions, and answers about the strange twilight world they live in. The Moon Bodega becomes an inbetween space, a metaphysical waiting room, and a place where curiosity and inquisition are the guiding forces. Through its script, art direction, score, and performances, this project utilizes the methodology of dream logic rather than conventional forms of dramatic storytelling.

SUPPORT

Placing a hand on the shoulder of another person is a way of offering moral support.

SUPPORT2

Apparently, the chances of fatality double when a father of a boxer is present at ringside.

TECHNOLOGY

First we build the perfect tool, then the tool builds the perfect us.

PUDDLE

Narcissuses missed the depth of the stagnant pool that he peered into. The surface has fatal edges. Though, being a flower for the rest of time can't be *so* bad.

TEARS

Working in such an effective way, ethologists say that the saline droplets coming from our eyes have been maintained through natural selection for our survival. They signal to others a need for an immediate response of care, empathy or help. In early art, tears have been depicted as gems, jewels, rain and rays of sunshine. In fairy tales, they have the ability to wash away curses or cure ailments. In early alchemical texts, they soften the parts of personality that have become stiff and hardened by life. Blood is our bodies' tears.

TRANSFERANCE

If one vaguely describes an image or a thought to a collaborator and the latter knows instantly what the former is talking about, then one needs to find a new idea, for it's been done too many times over.

TITLES

Eli Horn has done the title design. It was initially inspired by the cover of Thomas Pynchon's *Inherent Vice* - a painting by Darshan Zenith depicting a Ford Woody at the golden hour in front of a surf shop. It has an ominous electric glow to it.

UNDERAGE

For the briefest fleeting moment, you were the youngest person on this planet.

VACANCY

A wise old man once said 'beauty is but the promise of happiness.'

VO

Upon suggestion that the original script film was too abstract, I wrote in a narrator to tie in some of the more unexplainable bits, to add speech to the dense visuals. Working with a female Caribbean Narrator, Sherando Ferril, we recorded her the narration of the Bodega in her thick patois accent. It was in the edit room that the narration came off with too much didactic weight, it felt more mysterious and interesting to leave that track out and have the viewer enjoy their own speculation on the film.

UFO

Upon discussing an idea that I was working on, a close friend - a doctorate student - asked if I would like to come over the following week for a ceremony of sorts. I did, and when I arrived, a ritual was just about to take place. Before me, participants were smoking an Amazonian concoction that allowed you to experience your death. How could I say no? The experience was all-encompassing, beyond language or pictures or any other thing one could possibly dream up. 'Alien', is the only word that comes to mind. As I slipped into the matrix, I had a two-fold thought: a combination of 'nothing is even remotely close to this' and how had I never experienced this before?

YA'ABURNEE

There is a term that comes from Arabic. It roughly translates to 'you bury me,' a declaration to die before the person you couldn't bare to live without.

YAH

In 1911, at the age of 49, a man appeared at the foothills close to Lassen Peak in Northern California with singed hair and nowhere to go. He was Yahi, the last Wild Indian of America.²⁶ Following his capture, he was taken by anthropologists to live in the Halls of Anthropology in Berkeley, where he spent his remaining years working as a living exhibit and research assistant.

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